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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the history of discrimination in the United States and the length of time it took to abolish the legal support of racism. The paper then discusses the problems of diversity in the United States. Acknowledging and accepting U.S. diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, religious background, and national origin would enable the United States to treasure the concept of cultural pluralism. The paper that racism is the main obstacle to peace and tranquility, one that cripples the development of a prosperous society. The United States should focus on education and strive to develop better curricula to reduce discrimination and encourage students from all backgrounds to appreciate the opportunities available in the United States and exercise more respect toward other that have contributed to the United states' multicultural society. A model of racial, ethnic, and gender healing is presented. (Contains 1 figure and 46 references.) (SLD)

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Seeing Through Race, Gender and Socioeconomic Status

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Seeing Through Race, Gender and Socioeconomic Status

Men hate each other because they fear each other, and they fear each other because they don't know each other, and they don't know each other because they are often separated from each other.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Introduction

Racism has become a challenging problem facing the nation. Historically, the concept of race is used to divide human species with the intention to promote one particular race over another. These endeavors to assort individuals of different human races into lower groups or subspecies have perpetually created obstacles in the development of a healthy human society (Reese, 1998). Notwithstanding the difficulties and problems that have eroded their being, race is considered to be the conception deeply inculcated in the minds and hearts of many people across America, and in deed the world. Many individuals still believe that mankind can be divided into subraces. This ignorance conduces at its very least, the dearth of sympathy and compassion for other fellow human beings. The racial tension perpetually dwells in the America's multicultural society, and occasionally there have been grave racial occurrences. Nevertheless, collective efforts have not been contrived to liquidate the flare of racial tension (Vernay, 1990).

A nation whose motto is *E Pluribus Unum* (one out of many), in which its freedom form has influenced millions throughout the globe, cannot condone bigotry against any racial group without betraying its own prosperous history. Racism is an insult to human decorum, which ravages the whole humanity (The Vision Of Race Unity, 1999). It has exhibited a noticeable misfortune in America's diverse society (The Columbia Encyclopedia, 1993).

Racism has been the pivotal component in subverting social unity (Goldfield, 1997). Nonetheless, Racism is perceived by some Americans as a fundamental ingredient to determine an individual's capabilities, and competence. In the wake of such narrow-mindedness African-Americans, Hispanics, women, and other minority groups are blemished by such an ill intention (Institutional Racism in American Society, 1999).

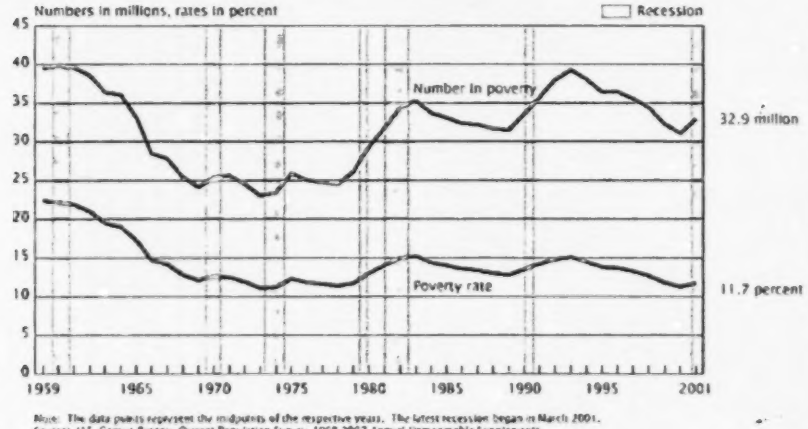
An individual's perspective about the society he or she lives in is formed and influenced by the bitter realities surrounding them. Therefore, it is very crucial before developing antibias slogans that we catechize our beliefs about race and its impact on the future of our country. This might include critically questioning our thoughts and judging our attitudes toward individuals in our multicultural society, a society that is created and nurtured by people around the world (Almeida, 1996). Discriminating against other racial groups only by the virtue of their unearned characteristics or for their socioeconomic class is contradictory to every basic human and democratic value that this country was built upon (Gutmann, 1987).

Race and Social Status

Racial prejudice is defined as an inimical adjudication, a belief that has developed over time without cognizance, or intentionally not investigating the truth. Such trends have led to the Jim Crow Law, which created obstacles for people of other racial and/or socioeconomic groups to enjoy the same privileges as the upper class citizens. Prejudice itself, might stem from a variety of factors, such as economic strife, social and cultural differences, which creates a roadmap to an unsecured and unjust social system. Many times when individuals from different cultures come into contact with one another their beliefs may wrangle. It is also true when individuals from various economic classes begin to compete (Beth, Mary, and Lauren, 1999).

Often times the proclivity en route to the social disintegration, which is intrinsic in the growth of an unjust socioeconomic system, is engendering aggrandizement in a racial discrimination and economic disparity. The pivotal irony is that the social discrimination paves a path to an excrescent monocratic ruling class to prevent a healthy socioeconomic growth, which has caused millions across America to fall into the penury ditch.

Figure 1- Number of Poor and Poverty Rate: 1959 to 2001



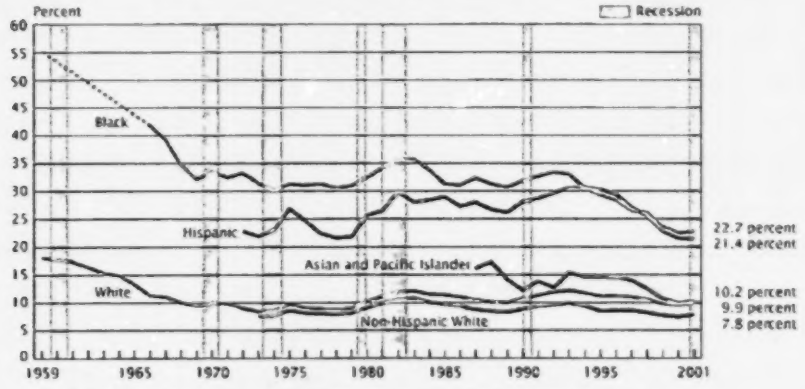
Note: The data points represent the midpoints of the respective years. The latest recession began in March 2001.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1960 2002 Annual Demographic Supplements.

Free Market, on the other hand is a conducive market in creating socioeconomic disparity by permitting market monopolies to choose the more financially able to hinder the less financially able to succeed (D.11, 2001).

Racial disparities can eventuate as a result of racial discrimination in any institution without any particular purpose or plan by any particular human being to impact and divest other individuals. And, when it is institutional discrimination, bias would eventuate in the absence of any particular soul being mindful that other individuals have been divested. In retrospect, utilizing race has not been perceived to be the factor of

racism, but the consequence of racism. Group(s) against other group(s) on the basis of color of skin, or socioeconomic status to create class and racial compartments on the grounds of racial superiority and class inferiority has based this concept on nothing but discrimination. Racism as a conceit has had generated connotation for almost all the establishments that one's intelligence, potential, social, health, or economic status is determined by his/her racial background (Randall, 1999). Such a connotation has led millions of our citizens with different racial backgrounds to live in poverty.

Figure 2-Poverty Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1959 to 2001



In our society, there exists a grave disparity between rich and poor classes. In 2000, the America's richest fifth received 50% of total U. S. household revenue, 5% increase since 1985, while the America's poorest fifth received only 3.5% of all U. S. household income, 5% decrease since 1985 (Facts About Hunger, 2002). Although, such disparity might not inevitably and deliberately occur, nevertheless, the disparity exists (Amanda, 1998). Poverty, which is the guardian of crimes, exists and has given rise to the crime rates in our society. According to the FBI reports, rape, robbery, burglary, car theft, and murder increased. Police forces made 13.7 million arrests for criminal offenses. An estimated 15,980 murders occurred in America in 2001 (The City Paper, 2002). As a society, it is pivotal to acknowledge, address, and pay more attention to controversial or different issues regarding racism, stereotyping, poverty, cultural differences, and socioeconomic obstacles that lead us to live in an unhealthy society, which diminishes the quality of America's life (Littlejohn, 1999).

The court ruling on Plessy vs. Ferguson in 1896, "Separate but equal" led to depriving African-Americans of the first-class citizenship privileges. Albeit Brown vs. Board of Education abated the ruling in 1954, the misery that followed the ruling left a grave stigma in all areas of American life. The attempts to amplify civil rights for African-Americans have involved some active organizations, such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Congress for Racial Equity, the Urban League, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Dr. Martin Luther

King as head of the movement in late 1950 until his death in 1968, Presidents Kennedy's and Johnson's commitment to more social and racial justice, the passage of the most famous civil rights legislation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, in which intricate all forms of discrimination, including race, color of skin, national origin, and religion in all public places, and Title VII, which also prohibited discrimination on the basis of gender and employment. In 1965, the Voting Rights Act was adapted by the Congress, which involved federal officers at polls to safeguard fair voting procedures. In 1968, the Civil Rights Act secured housing for low-income families (The Columbia Encyclopedia, 1993). Albeit, improvements during the last five decades have been made, evidences still contribute to shed light on discrepancies that still exist in reference to racial and socioeconomic status in housing sales and rentals, and employment practices. Racism in all its forms is considered as internal postures and consuetude that disrupt people's lives across America, and in deed across the globe for their unearned characteristics, such as color of skin, ethnicity, gender, or other physical features (Surgeon General's Report, Website 2002).

However, to cordially overcome socioeconomic and race related problems we must focus on education. The pedagogy in the education system must provide instructors and students with opportunities not only to engage in genuine discussions, but also to analyze the causes of such disparities in the power structure and economic status that are detrimental to harmonious race relations (Vernay, 1990).

Therefore, in schools, working with children with various ethnic, race or socioeconomic background, we must strive to know and acknowledge students' backgrounds. This would assist us in fostering different methods to teach and understand them better (Carmen, 1992). As a nation, it is pivotal and imperative that we shift our attention from raising a test score to raising a child. For, when we raise a child to be a responsible individual, we will automatically raise test scores.

Race, Socioeconomic Status, and Children

The insignia for cerebral superiority of one race versus another is usually predicated on insufficient and biased criterion of intelligence. Often we fail to consider the fact that children of various racial prejudices grew up in different surroundings that are conducive to fostering such belief systems. Likewise, the children of various racial and ethnic backgrounds who live and grow up in the same or similar environments may see no meaningful differences in intelligence, social skills, or socioeconomic status (Race Unity and the Institutes for the Healing of Racism, 1999).

Children, at an early age, realize dissimilarities amidst the people around them. They soon notice that power, influence, and prerogative create all the differences that make a ground-base for racial and economic disparities. Living in such unfriendly environments, children feel that intolerance toward other races or socioeconomic classes is okay. Such an environment creates in children uneasy feelings, and rejection of dissimilarities that could sprout into full-blown bias (Schwartz, 1994).

Research indicates that the low socioeconomic status could not only have a dire effect on the childbearing, upbringing, schooling, sociability, and marriage, but also, the

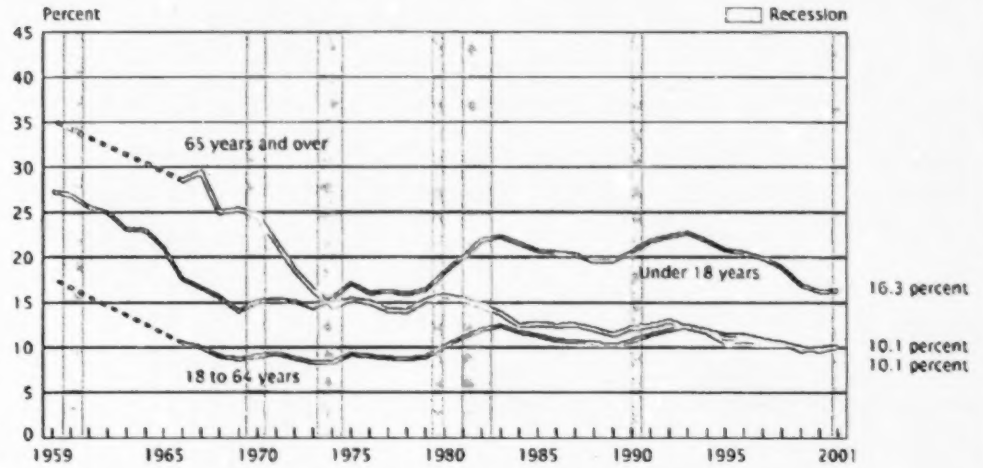
impact could continue to influence their senior citizen lives as well in which constitutes dysfunctional characteristics that would make them susceptible to diseases and other social miseries (Center for the Study of Aging, 1998).

Even in classrooms, in some instances, instructors' expectancies are affected by students' racial backgrounds. Nevertheless, this conceit varies from one classroom to another due to the instructor's moral convictions regarding instructional procedures whether he/she believes that all children are able to learn despite the differences in their ability (Caruthers, 2002). The classroom environment should be a mixture of racial integration with considerable attention given to socioeconomic backgrounds.

Since socioeconomic integration in classrooms can be a contributing factor to a limited racial integration, integrating students of various races or economic classes would ameliorate students' social and communication skills. For this very good reason social diversity in schools should be taken more seriously to generate the dynamics within the school systems to help in creating a better society that its members live in harmonious and responsible relationships (Jamieson Jr, 2002).

Children in racially or socioeconomically disproportionate families would almost certainly have inadequate education and limited access to a proper housing. These categories of children, as they grow up may work in the worst conditions with the lowest pay, which would make them more vulnerable to greater health hazards (Randall, 1999). Although, in the last decade child poverty has reached its lowest rate since the first half of 1970s, our nation is still facing the calamity of child poverty. According to the new census 12 million children live in penury (Facts About Hunger, 2002).

Figure 3- Poverty Rates by Age: 1959 to 2001



Note: The data points represent the midpoints of the respective years. The latest recession began in March 2001.
Data for people 18 to 64 and 65 and older are not available from 1960 to 1965.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1960-2002 Annual Demographic Supplements

About forty years ago, researchers started studying child penury. They examined interventions concocted to emulate and improve the adverse impact of poverty. Based on those studies and recent studies in child poverty the indications are that overall the child's upbringing in terms of academic achievement, intellectual, social, and psychological developments are affected by low-income status. Research, also brings into light that children grown in families with higher socioeconomic status can do better than children raised in families with low socioeconomic status in almost all compartments of life. (New Findings on Children, 1999).

Research confirms that poverty has already inflicted damaging impacts on children long before they are born. They are born underweight, malnourished after birth, and have little or no access to proper health care services. Poverty also gives birth to the environmental obstacles and other life disadvantages once children reach school age and are ready to attend. When in school, seldom the focus is on their ability and too often, "What disadvantage students lack...etc." Children of impoverished communities are lacking quality community services. The lower socioeconomic class nurtures stress in families, which could have a critical impact on their children throughout their lives (ENC, 2002). The figure bellow shows poverty by family size.

Figure 4, Poverty Thresholds

Poverty Thresholds for 2001, by Size of Family and Number of Related Children Under 18 Years (Dollars) - Created: January 22, 2002, Last Revised September 24, 2002

Size of family unit	Related children under 18 years								
	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight or more
One person (unrelated individual)									
Under 65 years	9,214								
65 years and over	8,494								
Two persons									
Householder under 65 years	11,859	12, 207							
Householder 65 years and over	10,705	12,161							
Three persons	13,853	14,255	14,269						
Four persons	18,267	18,566	17,960	18,022					
Five persons	22,029	22,349	21,665	21,135	20,812				
Six persons	25,337	25,438	24,914	24,411	23,664	23,221			
Seven persons	29,154	29,336	28,708	28,271	27,456	26,505	25,462		
Eight persons	32,606	32,894	32,302	31,783	31,047	30,112	29,140	28,893	
Nine persons or more	39,223	39,413	38,889	38,449	37,726	36,732	35,833	35,610	34,238

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey

Race, Socioeconomic Status and Health Care

According to the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine, minorities have inadequate access to health care treatment. As a result, the outcomes have had dire assessments compared with their Caucasian counterparts. The report concluded that not socioeconomic status, but race was one of the main components in creating such discrepancy. The health care providers have been using race, class, or socioeconomic factor to support their preconceived notions for treating patients. The report concluded that there was a strong correlation between poverty, education, lack of better social status and health care (Race vs. Income in Cancer Care, 2002). Some studies indicate individuals in rather poorer areas are more likely to leave school to find a job to make a living. This trend leads these individuals to pursue a lower career maturity, which in turn, limits their career choices (Kerka, 1998).

The socioeconomic disparities create indefatigable social inequalities that would have a direct affect on individuals' beliefs and convictions, which would make them less prone to pursue other avenues to promote their living standards (The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 2002).

Research indicates that racism and class discrimination have been utilized in the health care administration to treat minorities. As evidence shows, minorities have been complaining about the unjust attitudes of the health care professional for so long. Recent studies concluded that racial discrimination undoubtedly mounts stress, fatigue, and would have conflicting impact on emotional and mental disorders (Surgeon General's Report, Website 2002).

There could be varieties of discrepancies in the health care system, but racial discrimination seems to have contributed substantial disparities in the system. The health care administrators have used different factors, and methods for diagnosing and treating various races that would support the theory of racial categorization to use their preconceived notion to practice their racial biases in one of the most honorable, prestigious, and highly regarded fields, medicine. In more general terms, racial discrimination and prejudice, as components, have been utilized in forming societal settings, and disposition of every ethnic and racial group in the nation, and subsequently, have established an ominous impact on their health. As family, workplace, and social environments interact and interreact with socioeconomic, ethnic and health care, the disparities and the gap are widening to further perturb societal life. (Strategic Plan for Health Disparities Research FY 2002-2006).

One crucial question that we all have to ask, is race a matter of genetic conceit? The answer is certainly no! Research concluded that race doesn't behold such ideas as to observe a form to distinguish human beings from each other on the genetic basis. Nevertheless, it continues to be a matter and be a major factor throughout the globe. Research has also determined that race has been formed by social, legal, and political creeds within a society. Since it is not biological, then it is imperative that racial identity is not to be used for racial data to determine an individual's health status and procedural treatment (Randall, 1999).

Disparity in socioeconomic status affects health directly or indirectly through lack of proper education, fair income, or social classes. Often times, environmental fallouts, which stem from an intentional neglect due to the social class or racial discriminations in destitute areas, contribute many components that are conducive in creating health hazards (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2000). In American society, the disparities in the health care system stem from a number of components: the collapse of conventional medicine; absence of adequate economic accessibility to proper health care; lack of health insurance for many Americans in the lower socioeconomic level, which in turn establishes barriers to having easier access to hospital and health care suppliers; and fewer health personnel with different cultural backgrounds in the health care system (Randall, 1999). The new census (2002) indicated that 44 million Americans are without health care coverage.

Although, advances have been made in terms of quality health care services, the discrepancy in health care accessibility has continued (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2000). To cure such a plague in our health care system, it is crucial that we make the health care institution free of any individual or institutional racial discrimination (Randall, 1999).

Race and Gender Inequality

The comprehension and triumph over the internal gender bias is more important today than any other time in the history (Sadker, 2002). The unfairness and sometimes the harshness that women encounter around the globe through unwritten social policies or tribally oriented customs engender unimaginable suffering for women. The discrimination against women has multi-fold dimensions. Women face employment discrimination, limited educational opportunities, lack of proper health care, physical/sexual abuse, high poverty, and vast illiterate rates are common aspects for them in many societies across the world. In retrospect, gender and race have been common forms of discrimination in which often times they dualize prejudice and injustice against them. Internationally, occasionally women's social status and personal identity related to factors such as color, ethnicity, national origin, and race have given rise to "differences that make a difference in their lives." These social trends have created huge obstacles and inequalities for this group of human beings who are half of the human society and mother of the other half (World Conference against Racism, 2002).

The two-fold discrimination of gender and ethnicity/race is more noticeable in places where women are targeted for their sex and ethnicity. Such social attitudes disservice women by placing them in the most disadvantaged level in the society (UNIFEM, 2002).

Traditionally, women's roles in the society have been regarded as no more than housewives, mothers, and homemakers. This notion by men about women's potentiality was conducive to create a mindset that lowered women's social status, and many of them were deprived of utilizing their talents (Traustadottir, 2002). The conceit of gender is based on the culturally based belief system about men and women. Their societal roles vary from one culture to another. Historically, men have been perceived to have more

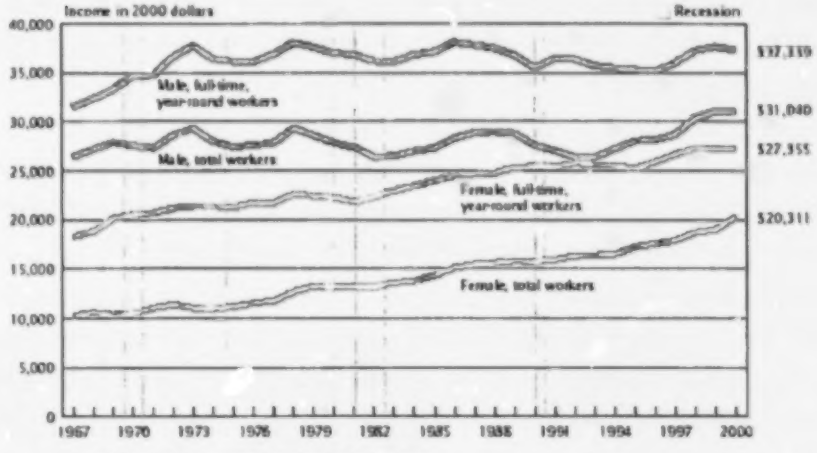
social, political, and economic powers than women, which led the society to ignore the precious abilities of women. Such treatments of women have left grave psychological wounds on their psyche and no pride to be proud of (Paisley, 1994).

In societies where gender discrimination exists, the identity of social infrastructures, economic, and political realms, is the depravation and depreciation of women's status (Patel, 2000). In such societies it is perceived to be unrealistic and unreasonable for women to beseech reasonable social accommodations.

In America, while of the adult population in which 52% are women they are still in a slim minority in holding executive offices. In the current U. S. Congress 13 (13%) of 100 Senators and 60 (13.8%) of the 435 Representatives in the House are women. In the Supreme Court 332 (20.6%) of 1,612 of federal judges are women. In the federal judiciary system there is little ethnic or racial diversity, 226 (16.9%) of 1,335 are Caucasian women, of 107 African Americans 28 (26.2%), of 53 Hispanics only 11 (20.8%), of 10 Asian Americans 3 (30%) are women, there are 3 Native American men, and of 104 of other backgrounds only 24 (23.0%) are women, 10% of state Governors, 19.9% of the state Senators, 23.3% of state Representatives, 9% of the state Judges, and 20.8% of the big city mayors are women (The Federal Government, 2002). 16% among the college and university presidents, 13% of business executives, 25% of academic executives are women, while of the current student body 52% are women. In the male-dominated society, men perceive themselves to have upper level organizational skills compared with women; such a perception has contributed a lot to devalue women's potentialities and experiences (Luba, 1997).

At the national level, the Constitution provides protection for all citizens from all backgrounds, and grants them ample rights among them freedom of speech, press, and religion. It provides for Americans the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In 1963, Congress passed the Equal Pay Act compelling employers by law to equalize the pay between men and women for the work that requires the same knowledge, and skills. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, granted women the same equal employment rights as men. In 1972, Title IX of the Education Amendments forbade sex discrimination in any educational settings that were supported by the federal grants. In 1991, the Civil Rights Act required all the workplaces across the nation to be more convenient and receptive to women (Hanks, 2002). With all these legislations in place the disparity in pay between men and women is still a major problem. In industry markets women make 78% of what men make in the comparative position (World Conference against Racism, 2002). *Figure 5* shows the discrepancy in pay between men and women.

Figure 5 – Median Earnings of Workers 15 Years Old and Over by Work Experience and Sex: 1967 to 2000



Women's earnings increased 3.5 percent since last year; nevertheless, the gap between the two earnings is still wide (U. S. Census Bureau, 2002).

At the international level, according to Gonzalez, in 1990s, the UNIFEM's global objective had three dimensions, improving women's status by at least 30% in political institutions, reducing poverty and promoting human development; by the year 2000, only eight countries including, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, and Sweden honored their objectives by having a minimum of 30% of women in their legislative bodies. Other countries, which increased women's ratio in their legislative bodies but did not reach 30% were, Cuba (27.6%), Argentina (23.0%), Barbados (20.4%), Guyana (20.0%), Bahamas (19.6%), Tobago (19.4%), Trinidad (19.4%), Costa Rica (19.3%), Mexico (17.9%), Ecuador (17.4%), El Salvador (16.7%), Jamaica (16.0%), Suriname (15.7%), Dominican Republic (14.5%), Belize (13.5%), Colombia (12.2%), Uruguay (11.5%), Venezuela (11.4%), Peru (10.8%), Bolivia (10.2%), Nicaragua (9.7%), Panama (9.7%), Honduras (9.4%), Chile (8.9%), Paraguay (8.0%), Guatemala (7.1%), Brazil (5.9%), and Haiti (3.6%). In Eastern European countries the presence of women, now is much less than what it was a decade ago (Gonzalez, 2002). This, perhaps, is due to the transitional period they are experiencing-moving from communism to democracy.

Historically, the status of women with disabilities has not only been disregarded, but also occasionally they have been sexually/physically abused. Albeit women and men with physical or mental/emotional disabilities are susceptible to be discriminated against.

Nevertheless, women with the same nature are at higher risks, because of the bias targeted against them. Studies about disabilities indicate that until recently the approaches and treatments had gender-blind attitudes among people with disabilities, and the impacts of gender was ignored in the lives of these individuals of both sexes. The permutation of disability and gender was not a factor of consideration (Traustadottir, 2002).

Women in the immigrant communities are also discriminated against because of their race, national origin, and gender. During wartimes, usually women under occupation have been physically and sexually abused only for their place in the occupied society (Women Caucus, 2002).

The gender gap is a universal phenomenon. Among 960 million illiterate people two-thirds are women. The worldwide illiteracy rate is 28.6% for women and 16.3% for men (Facts About Hunger, 2002). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the UN Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discriminations against Women (CEDAW) was adapted to put an end to all forms of discrimination targeted against women and demanded more tolerance and patience as the groundwork for justice and social promotion for women. However, gender discrimination is a disease that cannot be understood without understanding, acknowledging, and respecting the differences that exist among cultures, ethnicities, races, and social classes (UNIFEM, 2002).

Race and Law Enforcement Agencies

Racial typecasting as a disease appears to be a rampant and incurable practice, which begins in human beings, perhaps at an early age depending on the family and social environments in which one lives. Nevertheless, studies indicate that the conceit of race is a deceptive procedure to polarize people into various categories that have no base for conventional conviction or any scientific stand. According to the Center for Evolutionary Psychology at the University of California at Santa Barbara, stereotyping people by race is, "a reversible byproduct of cognitive machinery" that has developed to observe social interaction, which convinces us to believe that we don't inherent racism, for it is not genetic (Hall, 2001).

Racial discrimination in the police forces has been implemented through racial profiling. The racial profiling becomes evident when police intentionally target individuals from different racial, or ethnic backgrounds for unnecessary inquiry. Unfortunately, racial profiling, in spite of the Civil Rights Act in early 1960s, is rampant in America's police forces. Racial discrimination is also prevalent in the nation's criminal justice system (American Civil Liberties Union Freedom Network, 2002).

On July 7, 2002, the national TVs show a hideous crime committed by an Inglewood police officer violating a young African-American teen's civil rights. The incident had taken place the day before in Inglewood, CA, where officer Jeremy Morse picked up a handcuffed Donavon Jackson, 16-years of age who was mentally handicapped and slammed him face down onto the trunk of a police car, a few seconds later, Morse hit Jackson in the face with a closed fist. The scene instigated clamor of racism and quick comparison to the 1991 police beating of Rodney King, which also was videotaped. Later, the four officers were acquitted. The acquittal of the officers left the

city of Los Angeles with the worst urban riots in the modern U. S. history, which lasted three days, more than fifty dead, and billions of dollars in damages. The officers were retried, this time in the Federal Court. Sgt. Stacey Koon and officer Laurence Powell were found guilty and subsequently, sentenced to prison terms for violating King's civil rights (Whitcomb and Keating, 2002). Eleven years after the King incident, the young Jackson incident reminded us as a nation we still have a long way to go and much more to do.

The U. S. Customs Service until the early 1990s, was the first agency to use racial profiling against minorities, particularly against African-American and Hispanic air travelers. The Customs officials were flagging out minority air travelers, especially ladies for strip-search. The most astonishing case was the arrest of Amanda Buritica, a Hispanic woman* (Montgomery, 2001).

Traffic data across America indicate that African-America motorists were pulled over at an asymmetrical rate. The causes that African-American and Hispanic motorists were pulled over and the subsequent police conduct toward them were also surprisingly discrepant when compared with other white motorists. Needless to say that when radar surveillance was used the proportion of the stops of these minorities had a distinguishable difference (Ly, 2001).

In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, the American Congress adapted an antiterrorist resolution that permitted certain government agencies to utilize hidden adduce without any knowledge of the defendant to apprehend and if necessary to deport residents legal or not if they were suspected of terrorism. However, as a result of September 11, 2001, this law has been implemented particularly to target Arabs, Muslims and other Middle Eastern descents. Such a law has allowed the government to detain hundreds of Arab Muslims, some only as material witnesses for long periods of time without any legitimate evidence against them, which is a grave breech of the U. S. Constitution (Warikoo, 2001).

Conclusion

As loyal American citizens, it is imperative to realize that overcoming racial, ethnic, gender and socioeconomic disparities is the love of God. We must encourage citizens from all racial and ethnic backgrounds to participate in the process of developing "one nation under God with liberty and justice for all."

The evil of discrimination has been with this nation from the day of its establishment. When Thomas Jefferson wrote, "We hold these truths to be self evident that all men are created equal," he was a slave owner. It took this nation about 200 years to legally abandon such a demon. Therefore, we must teach ourselves about the beauty of diversity and see ourselves as "one".

Acknowledging and accepting America's diversity in terms of various race, ethnicity, gender, religious backgrounds, and national origin that exists in America today would enable us to treasure the concept of cultural pluralism. It would help us in our open society to maintain an autonomous participation in and development of our rich and

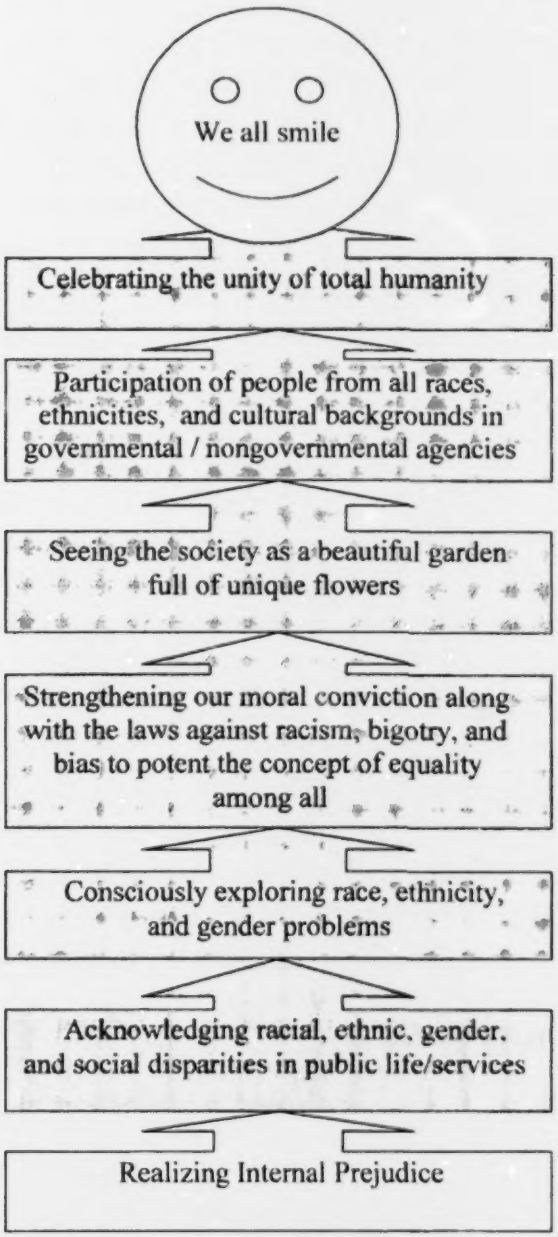
multi-aspect diversities to maintain our unique identity while contributing to and sharing the American common culture within the confines of a common civilization that make this nation so unique. In any free society the pearl of life is the acceptance of cultural pluralism as a national brawn rather than weakness. In our open society every minority group can preserve their dreams to dream the American dream.

It really doesn't matter where the discrepancies come from, whether they stem from racial, ethnic, gender, social structure, wealth, health care, or education we cannot and should not condone them, for we cannot find a single reason to justify them. Racism is the most calamitous and indefatigable demon. It is the main obstacle to peace and tranquility. Racism cripples the development of a prosperous society.

We should focus more on education and strive to develop better curricula to diminish all kinds of discrimination and encourage students from all backgrounds to partake in the process of developing appreciation for the opportunities we have in our country, and exercise more respect toward other cultures that have enriched the American multicultural society. The American education system should be based on building the conventional wisdom of the pearl of civic and moral values that are pivotal to maintain our democratic and humane values. To do this, we need to have a serious reform in our education system where students are encouraged to communicate with diverse ethnic, religious, or racial groups to be able celebrate the differences peaceably in harmonious relationships. We need to strengthen the rule of law to practice respect for the rights of individuals across the slate of diversity. The conceit of education should promote the essence of integration to enhance the pluralistic thoughts of (one out of many), and to sustain the validity of a common culture in which every minority group is encouraged to be proud of its heritage.

As a nation, it is imperative to eternalize our democracy by building a society where every citizen of this nation would have a better access to a better socioeconomic system that demotes disparities in all compartments of life; where America would have no homeless people; where this country provides a better health care system; where discrepancies no longer exist in the health care system; where women are not just no longer discriminated against, but also enjoy full equality with men; where we can provide the best tools of technology for our students across the nation not just to succeed in life, but also to be able to compete with other students in other industrial nations;
where this country has compassionate police forces vigilant to protect every citizen in this country regardless of his/her diverse background; where citizens' rights are no longer violated because of their unearned characteristics; where together we can uproot bigotry, bias, prejudice, stereotyping and racial discrimination. The model below indicates the hierarchy of racial, gender, and ethnic healing.

The Following Model Shows The Hierarchy of Racial, Gender, and Ethnic Healing


We all smile
Celebrating the unity of total humanity
Participation of people from all races, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds in governmental / nongovernmental agencies
Seeing the society as a beautiful garden full of unique flowers
Strengthening our moral conviction along with the laws against racism, bigotry, and bias to potent the concept of equality among all
Consciously exploring race, ethnicity, and gender problems
Acknowledging racial, ethnic, gender, and social disparities in public life/services
Realizing Internal Prejudice

* *"Amanda Buritica, a Hispanic school crossing guard from Port Chester, N. Y., was stopped in San Francisco on her way home from Hong Kong. She was handcuffed, transferred to a hospital and forced to swallow powerful laxatives in which caused her to move bowels 28 times. No drugs were found. After 25 hours, she was released without an apology."*

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